

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown below.

1 to 10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A photovoltaic element comprising:

a metal substrate;

a photovoltaic layer provided on the metal substrate;

a transparent electrode layer provided on the photovoltaic layer; and

a rear surface side bus-bar electrode having a portion welded to a

non-light-receiving surface side of the metal substrate, for electrically connecting the rear surface side bus-bar electrode to the metal substrate,

wherein a first transparent-electrode-layer-removed portion ~~in which~~ does not contain the transparent electrode layer ~~is not present~~ is provided at an outer periphery of the metal substrate, and

wherein a second transparent-electrode-layer removed portion ~~in which~~ does not contain the transparent electrode layer ~~is not present~~ is provided in a region to which the welded portion of the rear surface side bus-bar electrode is opposed, with the metal substrate disposed between said region and the welded portion.

12. (Previously Presented) The photovoltaic element according to claim 11, wherein the first and second transparent-electrode-layer-removed-portions are separate

from each other.

13. (Previously Presented) The photovoltaic element according to claim 11, wherein the first and second transparent-electrode-layer-removed portions are integrated with each other.

14. (Previously Presented) The photovoltaic element according to claim 11, wherein a current-collecting electrode for collecting power generated in the photovoltaic layer through the transparent electrode is disposed on the second transparent-electrode-layer-removed-portion, with an insulating member disposed between the current-collecting electrode and the second transparent-electrode-layer-removed-portion.

15. (Previously Presented) The photovoltaic element according to claim 11, wherein a plurality of current-collecting electrodes for collecting power generated in the photovoltaic layer is provided on the transparent electrode layer, and the second transparent-electrode-layer-removed portion is provided between the plurality of current-collecting electrodes.

16. (Previously Presented) The photovoltaic element according to claim 11, further comprising: a plurality of current-collecting electrodes for collecting power generated in the photovoltaic layer through the transparent electrode layer; and a bus-bar electrode for collecting power from the plurality of current-collecting electrodes.

17. (Previously Presented) A photovoltaic element module obtained by connecting the photovoltaic element according to claim 16 in plurality, wherein the bus-bar electrode of one of the plurality of photovoltaic elements and the rear surface side bus-bar electrode of another one of the plurality of photovoltaic elements are electrically connected to each other.